IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

| AMERICAN OVERSIGHT, 1030 15th Street NW, B255 Washington, DC 20005 | |))) |
|--|------------|----------------------|
| | Plaintiff, |) |
| v. | |) Case No. 18-cv-893 |
| U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTAGENCY, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Washington, DC 20460 | CTION |)))) |
| | Defendant. |))) |

COMPLAINT

1. Plaintiff American Oversight brings this action against the Environmental Protection Agency under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552 (FOIA), and the Declaratory Judgment Act, 28 U.S.C. §§ 2201 and 2202, seeking declaratory and injunctive relief to compel compliance with the requirements of FOIA.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 2. This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(B) and 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331, 2201, and 2202.
- 3. Venue is proper in this district pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(B) and 28 U.S.C. § 1391(e).
- 4. Because Defendant has failed to comply with the applicable time-limit provisions of the FOIA, American Oversight is deemed to have exhausted its administrative remedies pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(C)(i) and is now entitled to judicial action enjoining the agency

from continuing to withhold agency records and ordering the production of agency records improperly withheld.

PARTIES

- 5. Plaintiff American Oversight is a nonpartisan, non-profit section 501(c)(3) organization committed to the promotion of transparency in government, the education of the public about government activities, and ensuring the accountability of government officials. Through research and FOIA requests, American Oversight uses the information gathered, and its analysis of it, to educate the public about the activities and operations of the federal government through reports, published analyses, press releases, and other media. The organization is incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia.
- 6. Defendant Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is an agency of the federal government within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. § 552(f)(1) headquartered in Washington, DC. EPA has possession, custody, and control of the records that American Oversight seeks.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

Pruitt Travel FOIA

7. On February 20, 2018, American Oversight submitted a FOIA request to EPA seeking access to the following records:

Records sufficient to identify all waivers or waiver-related requests (including but not limited to emails, email attachments, memos, notes, or handwritten documents) and any final determinations either approving or denying EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt's first-class airplane travel for personal and business-related trips.

The request sought all responsive records from February 17, 2017, to the date of the search.

8. EPA assigned the Pruitt Travel FOIA tracking number EPA-HQ-2018-004640.

Perrotta Travel FOIA

- 9. On March 6, 2018, American Oversight submitted a FOIA request to EPA seeking access to the following records:
 - 1) Records sufficient to identify all non -coach air travel by Pasquale "Nino" Perrotta.
 - 2) All travel waivers, waiver-related requests (including but not limited to emails, email attachments, memos, notes, or handwritten documents), or final determinations either approving or denying first-class airplane travel for personal and business -related trips for Pasquale "Nino" Perrotta.

The request sought all responsive records from February 17, 2017, to the date of the search.

 EPA assigned the Perrotta Travel FOIA request tracking number EPA-HQ-2018-005157.

Perrotta Steinmetz FOIA

11. Also on March 6, 2018, American Oversight submitted a FOIA request to EPA seeking access to the following records:

All records reflecting communications (including emails, email attachments, text messages, telephone call logs, calendar invitations/entries, meeting notices, meeting agendas, informational material, talking points, any handwritte n or electronic notes taken during any responsive communications, summaries of any responsive communications, or other materials reflecting communications) between (a) Pasquale "Nino" Perrotta and (b) anyone acting on behalf of any of the individuals and/or entities listed below:

- a. Edwin Steinmetz;
- b. Edwin Steinmetz Associates;
- c. Sequoia Security Group;
- d. Robert Weaver;
- e. Steven Branigan;
- f. John McDonough;
- g. Richard Brusca;
- h. Concentric Advisors;
- i. P&P Construction;

- j. Centurion Analytics;
- k. The Guidry Group;
- 1. DFLabs;
- m. Argonne National Laboratory;
- n. CyanLine; or
- o. Potomac Security Services.

The request sought all responsive records from November 8, 2016, to the date of the search.

- 12. EPA assigned the Perrotta Steinmetz FOIA request tracking number EPA-HQ-2018-005159.
- 13. On April 3, 2018, EPA informed American Oversight that a search had been initiated for documents responsive to the Perrotta Steinmetz FOIA. EPA stated that potentially responsive documents had been identified and were ready for review.

Pruitt Vehicle FOIA

14. On March 19, 2018, American Oversight submitted a FOIA request to EPA seeking access to the following records:

All records relating to the procurement of any vehicle to transport EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, including documentation of the procurement itself, as well as communications about the decision to procure a new vehicle, which vehicle to procure, and the reasons therefor.

The request sought all responsive records from December 7, 2016, to the date of the search.

- 15. EPA assigned the Pruitt Vehicle FOIA request tracking number EPA-HQ-2018-005595.
- 16. That same day, American Oversight sent an unsolicited email to EPA providing the following clarification of the word "procurement" in the Pruitt Vehicle FOIA:

I write now to clarify that by "procurement," we mean either the purchase, lease, long-term rental or other long-term procurement of a vehicle for use by the agency in transporting Mr. Pruitt. By contrast, this request need <u>not</u> extend to every rental car Mr. Pruitt

may have used for travel or other similar, isolated single-use arrangements.

Exhaustion of Administrative Remedies

- 17. As of the date of this Complaint, EPA has failed to (a) notify American Oversight of any determination regarding American Oversight's FOIA requests, including the full scope of any responsive records the agency intends to produce or withhold and the reasons for any withholdings; or (b) produce all of the requested records or demonstrate that the requested records are lawfully exempt from production.
- 18. Through EPA's failure to make determinations as to American Oversight's FOIA requests within the time period required by law, American Oversight has constructively exhausted its administrative remedies and seeks immediate judicial review.

COUNT I Violation of FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552 Failure to Conduct Adequate Searches for Responsive Records

- 19. American Oversight repeats the allegations in the foregoing paragraphs and incorporates them as though fully set forth herein.
- 20. American Oversight properly requested records within the possession, custody, and control of Defendant.
- 21. Defendant is an agency subject to FOIA and must therefore make reasonable efforts to search for requested records.
- 22. Defendant has failed to promptly and adequately review agency records for the purpose of locating those records which are responsive to American Oversight's FOIA requests.
- 23. Defendant's failure to conduct adequate searches for responsive records violates FOIA.

24. Plaintiff American Oversight is therefore entitled to injunctive and declaratory relief requiring Defendant to promptly make reasonable efforts to conduct adequate searches for records responsive to American Oversight's FOIA requests.

COUNT II Violation of FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552 Wrongful Withholding of Non-Exempt Responsive Records

- 25. American Oversight repeats the allegations in the foregoing paragraphs and incorporates them as though fully set forth herein.
- 26. American Oversight properly requested records within the possession, custody, and control of Defendant.
- 27. Defendant is an agency subject to FOIA and must therefore release in response to a FOIA request any non-exempt records and provide a lawful reason for withholding any materials.
- 28. Defendant is wrongfully withholding non-exempt agency records requested by American Oversight by failing to produce records responsive to its FOIA requests.
- 29. Defendant is wrongfully withholding non-exempt agency records requested by American Oversight by failing to segregate exempt information in otherwise non-exempt records responsive to American Oversight's FOIA requests.
 - 30. Defendant's failure to provide all non-exempt responsive records violates FOIA.
- 31. Plaintiff American Oversight is therefore entitled to declaratory and injunctive relief requiring Defendant to promptly produce all non-exempt records responsive to its FOIA requests and provide indexes justifying the withholding of any responsive records withheld under claim of exemption.

REQUESTED RELIEF

WHEREFORE, American Oversight respectfully requests the Court to:

- (1) Order Defendant to conduct a search or searches reasonably calculated to uncover all records responsive to American Oversight's FOIA requests;
- (2) Order Defendant to produce, within twenty days of the Court's order, or by such other date as the Court deems appropriate, any and all non-exempt records responsive to American Oversight's FOIA requests and indexes justifying the withholding of any responsive records withheld under claim of exemption;
- (3) Enjoin Defendant from continuing to withhold any and all non-exempt records responsive to American Oversight's FOIA requests;
- (4) Award American Oversight the costs of this proceeding, including reasonable attorneys' fees and other litigation costs reasonably incurred in this action, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(E); and
- (5) Grant American Oversight such other relief as the Court deems just and proper.

Dated: April 17, 2018 Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Sara Kaiser Creighton Sara Kaiser Creighton D.C. Bar No. 1002367

/s/ John E. Bies
John E. Bies
D.C. Bar No. 483730

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT 1030 15th Street NW, B255 Washington, DC 20005 (202) 869-5245 sara.creighton@americanoversight.org john.bies@americanoversight.org Counsel for Plaintiff

ATTACHMENT E

CIVIL COVER SHEET

| JS-44 (Rev. 3/16 DC) | ~~~ | | | | ,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,, | | | ······· | |
|--|--|----------------------------|--|---|--|--------------|---|--|--|
| I. (a) PLAINTIFFS | | | DEFENDANTS | | | | | | |
| American Oversight | | | U.S. Envir | onment | al Pro | tection | Agency | | |
| (b) COUNTY OF RESIDENCE OF FIRST LISTED PLAINTIFF 11001 (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES) | | | COUNTY OF RESIDENCE OF FIRST LISTED DEFENDANT | | | | | ED | |
| (c) ATTORNEYS (FIRM NAME, ADDRESS | S, AND TELEPHONE NUMBER) | | ATTORNEYS | (IF KNOW | N) | | | | |
| Sara Creighton American Oversight, 1030 15 Washington, DC 20005 202.869.5245 | th Street NW, B255 | | | | | | | | |
| II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (PLACE AN x IN ONE BOX ONLY) | | | | | | | ES (PLACE AN x IN ONE I | 30X FOR | |
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Case 1:18-cv-00893 Document 1-1 Filed 04/17/18 Page 2 of 2

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| VII. REQUESTED IN CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDERF.R.C.P. 23 DEMAND: Check YES on lyif demain deduccomplaint | | | | | |
| VIII. RELATED CASE(S) | (See inst r u ction) YESL J | NOCX J If yes, p | olease complete related case fo n n | | |
| DATE: 04/17/2018 | I SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEYOF RE | cord <u>"</u> 'JYM t. t | | | |

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETINGCIVIL COVERSHEET J S-44 Authority for CivilCover Sheet

The JS-44 civil cover sheet an office in formatio on n tain office in neither eplaces no supplement the filings an office of pleadings rother papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This for napproved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of in itiating civil docket sheet. Consequent by civil coversheet is submitted to the Clerk of Court for each civil complain filed. Listed below are tips for completing the civil coversheet. These tips coin cidewith the Romannumerals on the coversheet.

- 1. COUNTOFRESIDENCE OF IRST LISTED PLAINTIFF/DEFENDAN(To) Countrof residence Use 11:0 to findicateplain tiffif resident of WashingtonDC, 88888 if plain tiffis resident of UnitedStates but notWashingtonDC, and 199999 if plaintiffis outside the UnitedStates.
- III. CITIZE N SHIP O FIRJ N CIPALPARTIES: This section is completed Q in if giver sity of citize in shipwas selected as the Basis of Jurisdiction undesection II.
- IV. CASE ASSIGN MENTANDNATURE OF SUIT: Takesign me not a judge to your case will depen on in the category you select that best represen the Illi ! Illi !calla of action found in your complain through any selection loon eategory. You must also select on on a nature found in dethe category of the case.
- VI. CAUSE DIACTIO Othe the U.S. Civil Statute uin dewhich you are fill in gain dwrite a brief statemen of the primary cause.
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FOIA Summons 1/13

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

CLEAR FORM

| | American Oversight | | |
|-------|--|---|--|
| | Plaintiff | |)) |
| | V. | |) Civil Action No. |
| | U.S. Environmental Protection | Agency | |
| | Defendant | |) |
| | | SUMMONS | S IN A CIVIL ACTION |
| То: | (Defendant's name and address) | Jessie K. Liu U.S. Attorney fo 555 4th Street N Washington, DC | |
| | A lawsuit has been filed a | gainst you. | |
| Civil | on the plaintiff an answer to | the attached connotion must be seen | ons on you (not counting the day you received it) you must implaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of erved on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and |
| comp | If you fail to respond, judg laint. You also must file yo | • | may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the ion with the court. |
| | | | ANGELA D. CAESAR, CLERK OF COURT |
| Date: | | | Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk |
| | | | digitalist of Clerk of Deputy Clerk |

FOIA Summons (12/11) (Page 2)

Civil Action No.

PROOF OF SERVICE

(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (1))

| | ceived by me on (date) | · | | |
|-------|------------------------|--|--|------------|
| | ' I personally served | the summons on the individual a | at (place) | |
| | | | on (date) | ; or |
| | ' I left the summons a | at the individual's residence or u | sual place of abode with (name) | |
| | | , a person o | of suitable age and discretion who resid | les there, |
| | on (date) | , and mailed a copy to t | he individual's last known address; or | |
| | ' I served the summor | ns on (name of individual) | | , who is |
| | designated by law to a | ccept service of process on beha | | |
| | | | on (date) | ; or |
| | ' I returned the summ | ons unexecuted because | | ; or |
| | ' Other (specify): | | | |
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| | My fees are \$ | for travel and \$ | for services, for a total of \$ | 0.00 |
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FOIA Summons 1/13

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

CLEAR FORM

| Plaintiff | | American Oversight | | |
|--|-------|---|---|--|
| U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Defendant SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION To: (Defendant's name and address) Jeff Sessions United States Attorney General U.S. Department of Justice 950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Washington, DC 20530 A lawsuit has been filed against you. Within 30 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: Sara Creighton American Oversight 1030 15th Street NW, B255 Washington, DC 20005 If you fail to respond, judgment by default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court. ANGELA D. CAESAR, CLERK OF COURT | | | |)) |
| SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION To: (Defendant's name and address) Jeff Sessions United States Attorney General U.S. Department of Justice 950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Washington, DC 20530 A lawsuit has been filed against you. Within 30 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: Sara Creighton American Oversight 1030 15th Street NW, B255 Washington, DC 20005 If you fail to respond, judgment by default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court. ANGELA D. CAESAR, CLERK OF COURT | | V. | |) Civil Action No. |
| SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION To: (Defendant's name and address) Jeff Sessions United States Attorney General U.S. Department of Justice 950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Washington, DC 20530 A lawsuit has been filed against you. Within 30 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: Sara Creighton American Oversight 1030 15th Street NW, B255 Washington, DC 20005 If you fail to respond, judgment by default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court. ANGELA D. CAESAR, CLERK OF COURT | | U.S. Environmental Protection | Agency | |
| To: (Defendant's name and address) Jeff Sessions United States Attorney General U.S. Department of Justice 950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Washington, DC 20530 A lawsuit has been filed against you. Within 30 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: Sara Creighton American Oversight 1030 15th Street NW, B255 Washington, DC 20005 If you fail to respond, judgment by default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court. ANGELA D. CAESAR, CLERK OF COURT | | Defendant | |) |
| Jaff Sessions United States Attorney General U.S. Department of Justice 950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Washington, DC 20530 A lawsuit has been filed against you. Within 30 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: Sara Creighton American Oversight 1030 15th Street NW, B255 Washington, DC 20005 If you fail to respond, judgment by default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court. ANGELA D. CAESAR, CLERK OF COURT | | | SUMMON | IS IN A CIVIL ACTION |
| Within 30 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: Sara Creighton American Oversight 1030 15th Street NW, B255 Washington, DC 20005 If you fail to respond, judgment by default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court. ANGELA D. CAESAR, CLERK OF COURT | То: | (Defendant's name and address) | United States U.S. Departme 950 Pennsylva | ent of Justice ania Avenue NW |
| serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: Sara Creighton American Oversight 1030 15th Street NW, B255 Washington, DC 20005 If you fail to respond, judgment by default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court. ANGELA D. CAESAR, CLERK OF COURT | | A lawsuit has been filed a | gainst you. | |
| complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court. ANGELA D. CAESAR, CLERK OF COURT | Civil | on the plaintiff an answer to Procedure. The answer or n ss are: Sara Creighto American Ove 1030 15th Stre | o the attached conotion must be son nersight eet NW, B255 | omplaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of |
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| | | | | ANGELA D. CAESAR, CLERK OF COURT |
| Date: Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk | Date: | | | |

FOIA Summons (12/11) (Page 2)

Civil Action No.

PROOF OF SERVICE

(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (1))

| was re | | e of individual and title, if any) | | |
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| | ' I personally served t | he summons on the individual a | t (place) | |
| | | | on (date) | ; or |
| | ' I left the summons a | t the individual's residence or us | sual place of abode with (name) | |
| | | , a person o | f suitable age and discretion who residual | des there, |
| | on (date) | , and mailed a copy to t | he individual's last known address; or | |
| | ' I served the summon | ns on (name of individual) | | , who is |
| | designated by law to ac | ccept service of process on beha | | |
| | | | on (date) | ; or |
| | ' I returned the summ | ons unexecuted because | | ; or |
| | ' Other (specify): | | | |
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| | My fees are \$ | for travel and \$ | for services, for a total of \$ | 0.00 |
| | T. 1. 1. 1. 1. | | | |
| | I declare under penalty | of perjury that this information | is true. | |
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| Date: | | | Server's signature | |
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| Additi | onal information regardin | ng attempted service, etc: | | |

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FOIA Summons 1/13

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

CLEAR FORM

| American Oversight | |
|--|---|
| |)) |
| V. |) Original Civil Action No. |
| U.S. Environmental Protection | Agency) |
| |) |
| | SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION |
| To: (Defendant's name and address) | U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Washington, DC 20460 |
| A lawsuit has been filed a | against you. |
| serve on the plaintiff an answer to Civil Procedure. The answer or address are: Sara Creighte American Ov | ersight reet NW, B255 |
| • | gment by default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the our answer or motion with the court. |
| | ANGELA D. CAESAR, CLERK OF COURT |
| Date: | |
| | Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk |

FOIA Summons (12/11) (Page 2)

Civil Action No.

PROOF OF SERVICE

(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (1))

| | This summons for (nam | ne of individual and title, if any) | | |
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| was re | ceived by me on (date) | · | | |
| | ' I personally served | the summons on the individual at | (place) | |
| | | | on (date) | ; or |
| | ' I left the summons | at the individual's residence or us | ual place of abode with (name) | |
| | | , a person of | suitable age and discretion who resid | les there, |
| | on (date) | , and mailed a copy to the | e individual's last known address; or | |
| | ' I served the summo | ons on (name of individual) | | , who is |
| | designated by law to a | accept service of process on behal | f of (name of organization) | |
| | | | on (date) | ; or |
| | ' I returned the summ | nons unexecuted because | | ; or |
| | ' Other (specify): | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | My fees are \$ | for travel and \$ | for services, for a total of \$ | 0.00 |
| | I declare under penalty | y of perjury that this information i | s true. | |
| | | | | |
| Date: | | | Server's signature | |
| | | | Printed name and title | |
| | | | | |
| | | | Server's address | |

 $Additional\ information\ regarding\ attempted\ service,\ etc:$

Print

Save As...

Reset